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welfare: an altruist's nightmare

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A QUESTION OF TACTICS (second of several parts)

Last month the New Left at Boston University received a near knockout blow, one from which it is still staggering blindly. An ad hoc group called the B.U. Students for a Free Campus circulated a petition, signed by 2000 students, which called for "immediate and decisive" action on the part of the Administration in the event of any distruptive demonstrations on campus. 2000 students rejected the idea that B.U. is a "revolutionary" battlefield. 2000 rejected, in principle, the tactics of terrorism and coercion. 2000 rejected the tactics of the New Left.

After four days of canvassing, the leaders presented the petition, the largest in years, to President Christ-Janer. Local press and television covered the event.

In full, the petition read:
"We, the undersigned, as concerned students of Boston University, demand that in the event of a take-over of a university building, or any activity which might hamper our attendance at classes and therefore infringe upon our legal rights to pursue the education for which we have paid, that such events be met with immediate and decisive action on the part of the administration."

Why did so many students think it was necessary to bring this issue

it should act accordingly. It should explictly prohibit obstructive demonstrations. It should stop sanctioning student groups that avocate the initiation of physical force to attain political goals. It should threaten -- and carry out -- the suspension, expulsion, and arrest of students involved in coercive activities.

This a campus, not a New Left boot camp. The terrorization ("radicalization," as the Leftists call it) of American colleges has gone far enough; the University should either begin protecting its rights and the rights of the students -- or start refunding tuitions. It should either stop equivocating and begin enforcing its rules or stop billing itself as a "university." It should decide whether it is to be a citadel of reason or a haven for criminals.

The Administration has no right to remain neutral in matters of this nature. It has a grave moral and legal responsibility to live up to the terms of its contract to provide education. It is an either-or proposition. There is no middle road position which will not ultimately lead to chaos, destruction, and "many Columbias."

WELFARE: AN ALTRUIST'S NIGHTMARE

Lanny Friedlander

"Welfare is a failure," said Massachusetts Welfare Commissioner Robert F. Ott last August. And reports pour in from around the country to confirm his observation.

Welfare recipients, protesting what they call "inadequate" payments, have turned to coercive and destructive tactics to gain concessions from public officials. Last summer, 200 Cleveland women strolled into a local department store and after selecting a sufficient assortment of clothing, instructed the manager to send the bill of the "buy-in" to the welfare department.

Some recipients, sensing the depersonalization that public asistance tendsto induce in its wards, plan to destroy the system by harrassment and overt terrorism. If they can force the present system to crumple, they believe officials will be more receptive to their proposals for a "negative income tax" -- a program they feel is less dehumanizing. In Boston last week, militant "Mothers for Adequate Welfare" (MAW) stormed a Roxbury welfare office and after tearing out phones, overturning furniture, ripping apart files, and terrorizing social workers, demanded winter clothing for their children.

For many, government confiscation and redistribution is simply too slow. Fed up with promises of better payments "in the near future" or "as soon as humanly possible," some have taken to the streets. Speaking about the riots and looting which swept his city last April, one Baltimorean said: "The whites won't give us what we want, so we take it."

If the system is failing, it is because it is burdened with irreconcilable contradictions of immense proportions. Welfare sets the

Mr. Weaver's "sensible" programs, then, for the confiscation of ever larger percentages of the earned income of taxpayers for the purpose of bestowing it upon non-producers, make little sense. He reminds one of the story sometimes told about warring tribes of hunger-crazed cannibals who, although they live amist opulent and deliciously edible vegetation, refuse to eat the fruit. When asked why they don't eat the abundant food around them, they answer: "Oh never! That would be nonsense. We'd rather eat each other."

EDITOR'S NOTES:

In the sept 30, 1968, issue of Newsweek magazine, the editors featured a six page article concerning the "Revolution on Campus." If we were to trust the title, we might expect an article dealing with campus activists, radicals, and revolution.

Yet nowhere in the article did the authors bother to define their subject, to define"revolution." Further, the authors failed to note any student opposition to the New Left.

While it is true that the collectivists have, for the most part, been parading in an intellectual vaccuum, it is also true that a growing number of students are becoming aware of the New Left's philosophical bankruptcy. There exists a growing anti-SDS sentiment among students, particularly on campuses where SDS has engaged in violent tactics. And at a number of schools, the collectivists face concerted intellectual opposition. Yet Newsweek's reporters failed to mention these facts.

They failed to mention the Committee to Defend Individual Rights (CDIR) at the University of Wisconsin, one of the more active student groups in the country. At Columbia, they failed to perceive the activities of the Committee Against Student Terrorism (CAST), a revolution in its own right. At Harvard, Radcliff, MIT, and the University of Virginia, the story was the same. The presence of any student opposition to the New Left was ignored. In an article purporting to present an accurate picture of campus "activism" (without specifying Left or Right), this lack of objectivity is disappointing, to say the least. Newsweek, the newsmagazine that "separates fact from opinion," apparently does so by ignoring those facts which do not conform to its opinions.

Newsweek, clearly, is "leaving the fact-finding to us." Because we believe that an objective presentation of the facts constitutes the major part of any newsmagazine's sales appeal, we cheerfully accept this "challenge by default." It could only be to our advantage.

REASON, therefore, will soon publish an article dealing with the growing number of campus organizations opposing the New Left. Because the philosophy of Objectivism presents the only consistent opposition to the underlying premises of the New Left, it shall be those organizations which consider themselves to be in accord with Objectivism which we will generally concentrate upon.